

EXECUTIVE DESK

Today nudism is in the throes of its most threatening period. Not even in its earliest days, when those who helped to found the organized movement worked in almost cloak-and-dagger secrecy, were there the different and varied kinds of disconcerts surrounding the movement. Today's threats come from both the right and the left, i.e., from the still small voices of narrow conservatism, and from the semireligious in the fashion and show worlds.

Somewhat surprisingly, all forms of nudity are getting a thorough airing in the press and in other forms of mass communication media these days. Professional people, too, have either ventured opinions or have taken the time and gone to the expense to survey (in depth, in some cases) the phenomenon of nude existence. Apparently, the time has arrived for an "open forum" on nudism. The question is whether all of this publicity is favorable or unfavorable to nudism's ultimate aims.

Dr. Joyce Brothers, for example, who is a psychologist and a former TV column writer, avers, in her syndicated newspaper column, that all of the reasons nudists offer to justify their way of life are nonsense. On the opposite side of the table is Dr. Martin Weinberg, a Midwest psychiatrist, who writes that nudism appears to have weathered its storms and that it now seems to have an established place in our social structure. West Coast psychologist, poll taker, educator, and writer, Dr. William Hartman, not only echoes Weinberg's opinion, he appears to extend them. In his survey (which will form the basis for a book on the subject—due for release in 1968) he states, among other things, that nudism makes for better people-to-people relationships and, therefore, for better marital conditions, for better adjusted children, and for a host of other good things in life.

URBAN NUDIST, well known as one of adult nudism's most vital voices, opens its pages to readers as a forum on the subject of the future of nudism. In this issue, reporter Richard L. Sargent gives most of the highlights on the Dr. Hartman story. Also contained in these pages is an opposing view—and this from a long time nudist—in an article that suggests not only the demise of nudism, but that predicts that the end will come—from within!

We are most anxious to hear from you—the people who are most concerned about nudism's future. Please write to us, making your feelings known. Space permitting, we will endeavor to print every letter. It is entirely possible that your letter to URBAN NUDIST might be the most important letter you will ever write.

Robert Reisman





Nudist Sojourn in the Wilds

A PROSE POEM

Free in nature—close to the
Surging, beating heart
Of our mother, the earth
Bent beneath the weight of
The uncreative world, we
Return, when labors are
Complete, to revel in the
Depth of our souls—made in
Nature—children of the wilds.
A quartet—father, daughter,
Mother, and mother of us all,
The wilderness. This is our
Pleasure and our greatest joy,
To rest unclothed in the sun







Our mother's breast is
Hard and firm today,
Breasting with the pressure
Of her endlessly abundant
Milk of life—the ever-free,
Ever-flowing streams of water
We trample with the loving
Thoughtfulness of children,
Confident that she will
Protect us from the dangers
Of the wilds. We feel the
Life force of the rocks,
The throbbing heartbeat
Of our selves, as we timidly
Stretch out our arms to
Touch the flowing liquid
Of the never-ending earth
This is our delight and
Our eternal joy—to wonder
Naked in the sunshine of God



This is the life for which our God designed our naked souls,
The beautiful blending of the good within us and
The infinite, impersonal rightness of the natural world
We feel the sun, and know our great dependence on his rays
We step upon the earth, and recognize her beauty
We wade into sparkling water—and understand in fullness
That all life depends upon these wondrous gifts:
Water, the ever-changing soil, and the glorious, glowing sun.





The other day, on the way home from a visit to some friends, we drove past the entrance to a nudist camp. Oh, we recognized it, all right; we used to be members there. That had been a long time ago, though, and we felt no temptation to turn up the road and pass through the gate. In fact, we were horrified at the thought. We have far too many more pleasant things to do.

It wasn't always like that. There was a time when we eagerly went to our door and hurried out to camp, unwilling to miss even an hour within its confines. Sometimes we look back on that time with nostalgia. It was fun to feel so enthusiastic about something—almost like being children again. I must admit that I, for one, resent the circumstances that have diminished our zeal and dimpered our impassioned devotion to a movement that still, on a theoretical basis, means a great deal to both of us.

There were, of course, many factors involved, each important in itself, yet few of them cataclysmic. They all combined to cause our attitudes to sour. There really isn't any correct order in which I can lay them. I'll just begin anywhere, and you'll have to remember that any other order of precedence probably would do just as well.

Let's start with the word *movement*, so often applied when referring to nudism. "The Nudist Movement," nudist leaders say, pompously and I'm usually tempted to run for a bedpan. Where did such euphemistic nomenclature originate? And why pray tell, has it been perpetuated beyond the narrow garbage can? "Nudism?" Pure "Nude Living?" Excellent! But *Nudist Movement*? Ugh!

But, of course, I'm not childish enough to quit nudism just because of an unfortunate choice of names. It's just that, somehow, the pomposity that is associated with the words "Nudist Movement" seems to cling eternally to the minds of all—or almost all—nudist leaders. I get the impression that many of them consider themselves to be high priests in some complicated religion, instead of simple political leaders of a basically nonpolitical group of people

IS ORGANIZED NUDISM DEAD, KILLED BY ITS OWN RULES? HAS THE AUTHOR WRITTEN A

REQUIEM FOR NUDISM

BY ELIZABETH REARDON



who just like to take their clothes off out-of-doors.

This attitude on the part of the leaders causes them to create many rules designed solely to regulate the type of people who are to be permitted to attend. This is, certainly, the height of stupidity. God made us all naked—can't just a select few who first had to pass muster at a nearby nudist camp?

When we first became members of a nudist club, we both ignored this "nonsense" idea. Maybe it was because we still felt that we needed to get permission to take off our clothes, just as, years before, we had had to wait for Mom's permission before we could go barefoot in the spring. I have to admit that we were pleased that we were "good enough" to join the select ranks of nudists and, at least temporarily, we ignored the fact that others were not as lucky.

Unfortunately, our joy was almost immediately spoiled. We had met, and very much liked, a young man who had one of the most beautiful tans we had ever seen. He was a single—poorly, and every such gentleman. We talked with him for hours as we lay sunning near the pool, and we shared with glee when, soon after we became members, he was elected "king" of one of the many festivals that nudists hold.

Then, one Sunday, we arrived just as he was heading out the gate. He solemnly shook our hands, explaining that he would not be back. He seemed unfazed and reluctant to talk, so we took his address and phone and suitably said goodbye. Since we had to pay the final installment on our membership, we waited until the camp owner had closed the gate behind our friend.

The owner, who obviously didn't notice our exchange of addresses, wrote a casual but outraged hand at the vanishing car. "Good riddance," she remarked. "We don't want people like that around here!"

I guess our surprise showed on our faces, for the continued "Hamburger Jack" discovered that young man in the men's room," she praised, computerically. "—masterbating!"



was conscious of the problem—insuring them that this would no doubt end the trouble. I have learned that a lot. All was machine and light again. Roger and Sherry were willing to forget and forgive. I, unhappily, found it difficult to be so pliable.

These two events put me on the alert. I began to notice other incidents that could not be considered unimportant.

At many of the camps there seemed to be, for all the protestation to the contrary, an unpleasant recognition with sex. I long ago learned that all entrance of action entails abhorrence, and when I found women who were unwilling to raise their legs when they lay down to sex because they were afraid of being considered too brazen, and parents who didn't dare to touch their children because they didn't want to violate the rule against bodily contact, I knew that I was among sick people.

Then one day the sex was shared with me. I really shouldn't have been surprised. John and I are far too trained to be able to keep up the good scenery if one wants to remain at least in a modest camp. We were walking from our tent to the pool. John affectionately put his arm around my waist, and I raised myself up on my tiptoes to kiss his cheek. Just then—no cause. After all, the children were with us, and anyway, we don't believe in getting married in public.

Before we reached the pool, we were screened by a grim-faced camp proprietor. "Please come into the office," she said, without her usual smile.

When we were inside the private cubicle, she opened up. Never—not even when I was a child and had cut my hair into an unrecognizable mess—had I ever received such a humiliating. We were lectured on the ASA rules, on "decency" behavior, and informed, before we could recover enough to even think of any answers, that we were no longer welcome at camp. A chance to respond we did not get, for the same owner stamped out of the room, throwing back a demand that we leave as soon as possible.



That, for both of us, was immediately. We were too shocked and horrified at our treatment to have any wish to remain. We bundled the kids into their clothing, pulled on our shirts and slacks, and were on the road in ten minutes.

On the way home, we discussed what we should do. Of course, we ended up by heading for the previous character, with whom we had

become well acquainted some months before. We stuck with the bottle until we received a grudging admission from the camp owner that she "might have been a bit heavy." On the advice of the grievance chairman, we responded with a statement that we hadn't understood just how things were done, and that things would be different henceforth. The ban was removed from our names.

Then we sat down and carefully wrote out our resignation from the camp. We explained that we were reformed adults and that we could not accept a situation where we could feel no confidence that we might not again be so misled. We expressed regret that our children would not be able to enjoy the pleasure of the company of other naked youngsters, but went on to say that we would have to solve this problem in some other way.

We explained that we still valued the nude life, and that we were very sorry that it had to be solved by



such ugly rules and abnormal, inhuman regulations. We included our membership cards in the envelope when we mailed the letter. Understandably, we have never returned to a camp.

Oh, we know a lot of nudists, anyway. We've kept in touch with a number of our friends from camp; they often visit us in our backyard situation of peace. It's been years since we threw up that dusty road to camp, and we haven't regretted our action since. Our daughter married a fine man, after all—in fact, he's the single friend we enjoyed so much during our first days as nudists. I'm proud to have him as a son-in-law, and he has made a wonderful husband and father.

I'll admit that there are many things that a good, well-organized nudist group could do. It could work for improved legislation regarding nudity. It could encourage the over-





violation of norms when nudity was accepted, norms that could, eventually, equal or exceed in conservatism the many somnolent resorts the country over. It could join with other civil rights groups to campaign for greater personal freedom in this "land of the free."

It could—but it doesn't. For the nudist "movement" hasn't changed

a bit in all these years. It is still full of people who need permission to take off their clothes. It still is involved in legislating the exact conditions under which this radical act may be committed.

Meanwhile, like human beings like ourselves continue to grow—and subsequently to leave—the ever-growing ranks of organized modern.

And I guess that's the way it will have to be—at least until some one wakes up to the fact that nudity is bestowed by God, and can't be legislated by mere mortals—especially not by dead, know-nothing people who have renounced their humanity in order to get permission to recover their human bodies.

Building The Body Beautiful





Many nudists accept the challenge presented to them by the sight of their own bodies. They want to feel that they are attractive and full of the natural health which is their due. Such people spend many of their outdoor hours in concentrated exercise. Most Americans, however, find that they do not adapt to lives of labor—especially during the hours that they consider most sacrosanct—weekend rest time. These people look upon "exercise bugs" with a mild form of horror, and approach the implements of such torture as they would a poison snake. Teasing and cajoling can sometimes convince such boysenoms that they should attempt a few "jorsses," and a "tiff," but nothing will serve to keep them at the intensive exercise long enough to do any good.



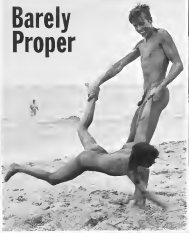


The presence of a pretty girl will spur otherwise uninterested males to bend down and pick up some barbells. If the bit of feminine pulchritude smiles sweetly enough, the simple man might even be tempted to try a few real, honest to goodness exercises in a boylike attempt to impress. Since they are only done when someone is looking, not much physical growth results.





Barely Proper



The potential impact of sunbathing upon our society is apparent to even the most casual observer. But a correct comparison with the continued rise made by the existence of people like nudists, who believe in total nude living. Richard O. Flinn, in a syndicated column, "A Funny Thing Happened," in the Birmingham, Alabama, News, recently devoted an entire day's spread to a discussion of the many reasons why nudity, in his opinion, would never become publicly accepted as proper social "behavior." He eloquently points out several looks

"But we of the knobby knees and pug belly set will protest the forthcoming fashion. We wear clothing to

hide and disguise. For some of us it is bad enough to have to expose our faces, and going further is more than we can bear."

He continues, "The ordinary person does not want to show off his deformed body and, in addition to that, nobody wants to look

"Most of us are too fat or too skinny, have skin blemishes, blemishes or warts on chest. We are thankful for clothing as an acknowledgment of our ugly figures."

Nudists have heard this line of reasoning for years, voiced by women who are reluctant to try the nudist life. We know that it deserves little of any serious consideration. Nudists have no trouble in that area. Not

that all nudists are beavers in the century, they're ordinary people like those Mr. Flinn discusses. They just have learned to recognize that looks are not that important.

Evidently nudists aren't the only ones to have reached such a conclusion. In the San Francisco, California, Chronicle is another syndicated column, "The Question Man," by O'Hara, where people were asked the question, "Would you like to visit a nudist camp?" All but one answered "yes." Interestingly enough, that one proceeded to say some very nice things about nudism. She remarked:

"... I like to sunbathe on a private sun deck, not in a nudist camp. However, I'd think that people are true health enthusiasts. I think the general public would get an eyecatch of this. It isn't. They seek privacy. If they were embarrassed, they could always get a job at North Beach."

The idea that nudism is a better form of health club is obviously quite common among nudists. That even might be true, but evidently not to any extreme degree. A recent study of nudists, made by Dr. William Hartman, included the administering of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) to 159 nudists in the state of southern California. Dr. John P. Brainer, who was involved in the scoring of the tests, released his findings to the Minneapolis, Minnesota, Tribune. What he had to say is worth hearing.

"Nudism can mean more normal than most of us. They tend to be a healthy, well-adjusted group of people. I can't explain it, but nudists have been saying this for years. Maybe they're right."

Brainer concluded, "Most of the men, and all of the women, join nudist clubs for relatively healthy reasons. They're social nudists, but they're more social than nudists."

Dr. Martin S. Wosberg, a psychanalyst in Chicago, Illinois, recently carried out a study of 184 males in and about the Chicago area. His findings corroborate Fitter's theory that many people will not accept reality because they are too ashamed of their looks.

Dr. Wosberg, according to the *Minneapolis Tribune*, *Commercial Appeal*, found that "one of the chief anxieties people had about reality was shame over their bodies."

He went on, however, to relate the reality of such an objection: "In most instances, the initial nervousness disappeared soon after the new-comer's sexual 77 percent said they felt at ease on arrival or within three hours."

In other words, all these hesitant newcomers referred to by Mr. Fitter would soon lose their preoccupation with their own looks—once they took that step into naked freedom.

* * *

Many people are doing just that when they make their initial visits to the free beaches, now located in a number of states throughout our country. Others, members of the public press, are learning about nudity when they are assigned to "cover" a nudity convention. John Sherwood, a columnist for the *Washington, D.C., Star*, is one such as "unpacks." He reported on his visit in a recent issue of his column, "The Rambler."

His report is laudatory, but true to form.

He (the Rambler) spotted a very attractive young blonde sitting in a little conversation registration booth decorated with red, white and blue bunting. She asked politely for the Rambler's credentials, handed him a cloth sandwich marked "FREEZE," and suggested innocently if he was going to take off his clothes."

He did, in a tent owned by the media's publicity agent, Paul, and

"Then the new Rambler walked out in a world he had never known before. He did feel a sense of freedom, but he also felt a cold draft. Although he hasn't reported it, he did grab a bath towel on the way out and threw it over his shoulder. After

all, Paul did the same thing, didn't he? Sure he did."

We can assume that he soon learned that the towel Paul was carrying was for a guiding when he sat down, not as a protection against breezes.

* * *

Much is said about the moral nadir we take in favor of total nudity—but, recently, much more was said regarding their stand against semi-nudity, in the form of sexy-sexy bikini. A number of complaints have been registered, lately, by readers who objected to an ad for a bikini that was a steady feature in the *American Sunbathing Association's* official publication, *The Bulletin*.

One reader was so incensed that he sent a copy of *The Bulletin* to Paul Joyce, of the *Bulletin*, New York, *Consumer Express*. In the issue were many letters complaining about the ad. Paul Joyce could not maintain his composure when he quoted the final letter, and the reply given by Ross Holroyd, who is the Executive Director of the ASA, and, therefore, in charge of *The Bulletin* page work:

"Please, Ross . . . his letter ended, 'close up the Bulletin!'"

"That people like cannot be topped. But, it should be added that *The Bulletin* office, in rebuttal, wrote that the *Tobettes* are made by Toby Stern, wife of the ASA, penny herself, and that the ASA shares in the sales price."

"That same nation should continue to regard the bikini as an anachronism is a matter of personal feeling," the editor said. "However

the bikini is here to stay."

"Those who disagree," he concluded, rather timidly, "can always exercise their option and to buy."

It seems thoroughly possible that nudists might be in danger of becoming too set in opposition to dress—in any form—and that such an uncompromising attitude is no better than that of people who oppose nudity at all times, under all conditions. Moderation is best, says tell us, in everything—including attitudes towards nudity. ■■■

Letters

Dear Miss Bancroft:

Issue #27 of *URBAN NUDIST* was just fine except for one thing: on back pages 13 and 15 you lost parts of the article under the photos. I found myself reading down to the photo and then going to the next column. It was most confusing! Why can't you move the photos down a half-inch to make reading easier?

By the way, I've always wanted an explanation of the markings on the arms of some of your people. "Laura 3," and "Martha 1," for example.

M. S.
Duluth, Minnesota

Comment:

There are the names of the girls, or boys, and the number of the sweater to whom they were assigned. All such photos were taken at one of the yearly conventions of the Junior Western Sunbathing Association.

Dear Miss Bancroft:

I got your magazine, *URBAN NUDIST*, and it's pretty good. Most of all I liked the water fight. There were some very fine pictures. Are there really that many kinds of every model come?

B. H.
Salt Lake City, Utah

Comment:

See the comment above for your answer. These kids are members of different groups, gathered together for a convention.

Dear Miss Bancroft:

Thanks to *URBAN NUDIST*, my wife has finally consented to visit a nudist camp with me. I've tried talking her into it for years, with no success, and, then, last week I brought some *URBAN NUDIST* #27. One look at that lovely lady on the back cover did it. Now I can hardly move her enough to get us out to a camp—I promise, the one where that lady belongs, Glen Eden.

Thanks for helping a frustrated nudist out.

Gratefully,
S. G.
Santa Monica, California





Camp owners usually wait until a new sport has been accepted fully before they go to the expense of adding new equipment. They also try to design facilities so that they can serve dual purposes: Hiking trails can be used for cycling, volleyball courts make good skating rinks, and swimming meadows can serve as baseball fields or for archery ranges. Lakes, man-made or natural, are used for swimming.

